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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

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THE CHOLERA SITUATION.

Reports received indicate that the outbreak of cholera in the northern part of Italy has about subsided, and that fewer cases are being reported in the rest of Italy. Otherwise there has been no material change in the cholera situation during the past week.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PREVALENCE OF TYPHOID FEVER AT CHARLES TOWN, W. VA.

By J. R. RIDLON, Assistant Surgeon, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

Upon request of the State board of health to the Surgeon General, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, to send an officer for the purpose, the writer was detailed to conduct investigations of typhoid fever in Charles Town, W. Va., and vicinity, to determine the cause of the undue prevalence of the disease, the methods of transmission, and the measures necessary for its control. The investigation extended from August 19 to September 13, 1911.

It is a pleasure to make due acknowledgment of the help and courtesies afforded by the board of health, the mayor and city council, the local newspapers, the officials of the water company, and various other citizens of the city. Appreciation is expressed for the cooperation of the local physicians, without which assistance a complete investigation would have been impossible.

A temporary laboratory, supplied from the Hygienic Laboratory, was established in Charles Town at the office of Dr. C. L. Skinner, for whose courtesy appreciation is also expressed.

POSSIBLE CAUSES.

A preliminary survey of the situation showed that the possible causes to be considered were much the same as in other localities at this season of the year, namely, (1) water supply; (2) milk supply; (3) ice supply; (4) uncooked fruits and vegetables; (5) other food supplies, including ice cream, shellfish, and bakery products; (6) infection by personal contact; (7) infection by flies; and (8) infection through faulty disposal of excreta.